

# CLEAR AMBITION

Expansive sheets of glass are now an essential component of any high-end extension, a way to bring the outside in and create a dramatic entertaining space. By **Patricia Cullen**



**CLEAR AND PRESENT**

**Right:** This glazed walkway was added to Hay Carr, a magnificent 18th-century estate near Lancaster. For sale at £3.95m, through [knightfrank.co.uk](http://knightfrank.co.uk) and [struttandparker.com](http://struttandparker.com)



PHOTOGRAPH MEL YATES



**BOXING CLEVER** Above: A detached house in Chiswick was given this sculptural extension, with two glass walls, by Gregory Phillips Architects



heat. Solutions include solar control glass and air conditioning. Large expanses of glass will make properties harder to heat so invest in underfloor heating. Security can become an issue so consider roller blinds or privacy sheers."

Either way, glass is a luxury. As Philip Johnson, the late American architect and winner of the first Pritzker Architecture Prize, who built an entirely transparent home ensconced in glass in 1949, once advised, "Don't build a glass house if you're worried about saving money on heating". ■

**GREATER TRANSPARENCY** Clockwise from left: The dining room of a 6,000 sq ft new-build house in Caversham, Berkshire, by Gregory Phillips Architects; a clever use of glass opens up this property in Crinan Street, N1, to rent through *sothebysrealty.com*, £2,950pw; this Grade-II listed house in east London was transformed by architects Mikhail Riches. Pictured is the rear extension library



For centuries the use of glass for aesthetic or architectural purposes has introduced decadence to the properties it adorns. Now, as cutting-edge technologies in glass manufacturing are making exceptional residential reinventions possible, expansive glass-box extensions and frameless sliding doors are all the rage in London's smartest homes.

Suddenly, the humble side return seems rather passé, as extensions become bigger and bolder. "We have seen a big increase in interest in glass extensions amongst buyers, and a greater number of sellers renovating their properties to include these," says Paul Cosgrove, director at Finlay Brewer. "It's very much in vogue as a way of cleverly combining the raised and lower ground floors in order to integrate the spaces and maximise light. These are particularly popular spaces to host

parties or large family gatherings." Viki Lander, creative director at Ensoul, an architectural and interior design practice, believes the current appeal of glass defies house types. "It is now an expectation that a property should have large expanses of glazing to the rear, whatever the

*'A spectacular solution to living in a modern way with the British climate, being able to observe the wind, rain or snow from the warm interior space'*

period of the property. The less framework you want to see on your glazing, the more expensive the solution."

Gregory Phillips runs Gregory Phillips Architects, an award-winning architecture practice which has built numerous modern extensions using glass in prime central London. "The large sliding

panels which are typically double glazed are a spectacular solution to living in a modern way with the UK climate. Being able to observe the wind, rain or snow from the warm interior space is fantastic and having the option to slide doors away and feel like your room is outside is wonderful

when it is warm outside."

Phillips favours the minimal frame, maximum glass option. "The thin-frame large sliding glazed panels are my favourite solution as they create the least visual barrier to blurring the inside/outside boundary."

Will Vaughan, manager of John D Wood & Co in Notting Hill

agrees. "People love a space that is somewhere between being indoors and outdoors. Unpredictable weather in the UK is always an issue and this type of structure gives people the best of both worlds, providing outside space without being overly exposed to the elements. From a more practical perspective permission for glass framed extensions are also generally easier to obtain, making this type of structure a popular choice for those wanting to add square footage to their homes."

Viki Lander says that roof lights are also in hot demand and are an ideal and stylish way to bring light to London's often narrow, dark period houses. "Large single, frameless sheets and multiple industrial looking panels divided by raw steelwork can provide glorious light over dining tables in side returns. Long slot-shaped, fixed panels over stairwells help you to throw light down properties' otherwise dark hallways."

PHOTOGRAPH TIM CROCKER

Some of the most striking modern extensions can be when sleek architectural lines blend with historical properties.

Phillips says that a project of his in Chiswick, *pictured opposite*, was perfect for achieving this blend. "The scale of the design sits well with the existing building, giving the new addition some gravitas."

For those looking for a luxury extension there are numerous acclaimed glass manufactures including IQ Glass, L2i Ltd or Maxlight. But what do they cost? Jade Cottey, of IQ Glass, says "minimal framed glass box extensions which are habitable all year round can cost from £2,000-£3,000 per sq m. Three-sided glass box extensions which are habitable all year-round, will usually start at £25,000," but the sky's the limit.

How you intend to use the space is crucial to decipher before you begin, says Viki Lander. "Consider which direction the glazing faces as sunlight creates

